

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-44. (Canceled)

45. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion;

an anchoring member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body, configured such that it does not obstruct the aperture in the distal portion of the elongate body, and directly secured to the steering wire;

means, directly connected to the anchoring member, for preventing compression of the elongate body distal portion during bending of the elongate body distal portion; and

a tubular member, that is a partial circle in cross-section and includes first and second longitudinally extending edges that together define a slot, which extends completely through the tubular member at the first and second edges, in which a portion of the steering wire is located, positioned relative to the means for preventing compression so as to prevent the means for preventing compression from tearing through the elongate body when the means for preventing compression bends.

46. (Canceled)

47. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a diameter, a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body and defining a proximal end, a distal end, a length that extends from the proximal end to the distal end, a proximal half that occupies one-half of the length and a distal half that occupies one-half of the length;

an anti-tear device positioned within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface adjacent to at least a portion of the proximal half of the stiffening member and not adjacent to the distal half of the stiffening member, and configured to prevent the stiffening member from tearing through the elongate body when the stiffening member bends; and

a steering wire, which is not connected to the anti-tear device and which is not located within the stiffening member, having a distal portion operably connected to the distal portion of the elongate body;

wherein the stiffening member and the distal portion of the steering wire are substantially diametrically opposed from one another.

48. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the anti-tear device is secured to the stiffening member.

49. (Canceled)

50. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the anti-tear device comprises a tubular member.

51. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the anti-tear device comprises a tubular member with a slot.

52. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion operably connected to the distal portion of the elongate body;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body; and

a substantially c-shaped anti-tear device, including first and second longitudinally extending edges that together define a slot which extends completely through the tubular member at the first and second edges, associated with the stiffening member such that a portion of the stiffening member is distal of the anti-tear device;

wherein a portion of the steering wire is positioned within the slot; and

wherein the stiffening member is substantially longer than the anti-tear device.

53. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the elongate body defines a longitudinal axis and the stiffening member extends less than entirely around the longitudinal axis.

54. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 53, wherein the anti-tear device extends further around the longitudinal axis than the stiffening member.

55-64. (Canceled)

65. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a diameter, a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a solid wall formed from a single material defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen defined by the inner surface extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion that is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface and is operably connected to the distal portion of the elongate body;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body and defining a proximal end; and

an anti-tear device, defining a proximal end and a distal end, secured directly to the proximal end of the stiffening member such that the proximal end of the anti-tear device is located within the distal portion of the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface;

wherein the elongate body defines a distal end and at least a portion of the stiffening member is located proximal of the distal end of the elongate body; and

wherein the steering wire is not directly connected to the anti-tear device and is substantially diametrically opposed to the stiffening member.

66-67. (Canceled)

68. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a proximal portion, a distal portion and a diameter, the distal portion defining a longitudinal axis, and including a wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a stiffening member, defining a proximal portion and a distal portion, associated with the distal portion of the elongate body such that the stiffening member will apply a force over an elongate body surface area when the stiffening member is bent;

anti-tear means, secured directly to the proximal portion of the stiffening member and located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface, for preventing the stiffening member from tearing through the elongate body wall by increasing the elongate body surface area over which the force is applied

when the stiffening member is bent to prevent the stiffening member from tearing through the elongate body; and

a steering wire, which is not connected to the anti-tear means, having a distal portion operably connected to the distal portion of the elongate body;

wherein the stiffening member and the distal portion of the steering wire are offset from one another by about 180 degrees about the longitudinal axis.

69. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a longitudinal axis, a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a substantially solid single-piece wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion;

an anchoring member located within the distal portion of the substantially solid single-piece elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface and secured to the steering wire;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body and defining a distal end, the distal end of the stiffening member being directly secured to the anchoring member; and

a substantially tubular member directly secured to the stiffening member and defining a continuous length in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis and a wall thickness, the continuous length being substantially greater than the wall thickness;

wherein the steering wire is not connected to the substantially tubular member.

70. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a longitudinal axis, a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a substantially solid single-piece wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion;
an anchoring member located within the distal portion of the substantially solid single-piece elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface and secured to the steering wire;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body and defining a distal end, the distal end of the stiffening member being directly secured to the anchoring member; and

a substantially tubular member, including a slot through which the steering wire passes, secured to the stiffening member and defining a continuous length in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis and a wall thickness, the continuous length being substantially greater than the wall thickness.

71. (Previously Presented) An apparatus, comprising:

an elongate body defining a longitudinal axis, a proximal portion and a distal portion and including a wall defining an inner surface, an outer surface and a lumen extending from the proximal portion to an aperture in the distal portion;

a steering wire having a distal portion;

an anchoring member located within the distal portion of the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface and secured to the steering wire;

a stiffening member associated with the distal portion of the elongate body and defining a distal end, the distal end of the stiffening member being directly secured to the anchoring member; and

a substantially tubular member, which extends less than completely around the longitudinal axis, secured to the stiffening member and defining a continuous length in a direction parallel to the longitudinal axis and a wall thickness, the continuous length being substantially greater than the wall thickness.

72. (Canceled)

73. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, further comprising:

a handle, operably connected to the elongate body and to the steering wire, adapted pull the steering wire relative to the elongate body.

74. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the steering wire extends to the proximal portion of the elongate body and is movable relative to the proximal portion of the elongate body.

75. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein at least a portion of the steering wire is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

76. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the anchoring member is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

77. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the means for preventing compression is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

78. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the means for preventing compression is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

79. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the elongate body defines a longitudinal axis; the steering wire and the means for preventing compression are radially offset from the longitudinal axis; and

the steering wire and the means for preventing compression are substantially diametrically opposed from one another.

80. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the distal portion of the steering wire is secured to the elongate body at a location within the wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

81. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein the stiffening member is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

82. (Canceled)

83. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein at least a portion of the steering wire is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

84. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein the stiffening member is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

85. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein the substantially c-shaped anti-tear device is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

86. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein the elongate body defines a longitudinal axis;
the steering wire and the stiffening member are radially offset from the longitudinal axis; and

the steering wire and the stiffening member are substantially diametrically opposed from one another.

87. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 65, wherein the stiffening member is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

88. (Canceled)

89. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 68, wherein at least a portion of the steering wire is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

90. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 68, wherein the stiffening member is located within the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

91. (Canceled)

92. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the anchoring member is directly secured to the steering wire.

93. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the anchoring member is directly secured to the steering wire.

94. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the substantially tubular member is directly secured to the stiffening member.

95. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 71, wherein the anchoring member is directly secured to the steering wire.

96. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 71, wherein the substantially tubular member is directly secured to the stiffening member.

97-98. (Canceled)

99. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the substantially tubular member is located within the distal portion of the substantially solid elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

100. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the substantially tubular member is located within the distal portion of the substantially solid elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

101. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 71, wherein the substantially tubular member is located within the distal portion of the elongate body wall between the inner surface and the outer surface.

102. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the single-piece wall extends from the inner surface to the outer surface.

103. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the single-piece wall extends from the inner surface to the outer surface.

104. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 45, wherein the tubular member defines proximal and distal longitudinal ends and the first and second longitudinally extending edges extend continuously from the proximal longitudinal end to the distal longitudinal end.

105. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 104, wherein the portion of the steering wire that is located within the slot is axially and radially aligned with the slot.

106. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein the anti-tear device defines proximal and distal longitudinal ends and the first and second longitudinally extending edges extend continuously from the proximal longitudinal end to the distal longitudinal end.

107. (Previously Presented) An apparatus as claimed in claim 106, wherein the portion of the steering wire that is located within the slot is axially and radially aligned with the slot.

108. (Canceled)

109. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 47, wherein there is no an anti-tear device positioned adjacent to the distal half of the stiffening member.

110. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 52, wherein distal portion of the elongate body defines a circumference and the stiffening member is coextensive with substantially less than one-half of the circumference.

111. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 69, wherein the elongate body and the substantially tubular member are separate elements.

112. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 70, wherein the elongate body and the substantially tubular member are separate elements.